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Parent Handbook 2025-26

Celebrating the Wonder of Early Childhood

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MISSION

Since establishing in 1976 Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool celebrates the wonder of early childhood and the joy of learning in a playful world of imagination, exploration, discovery, and warm relationships with friends, family, and community.

PHILOSOPHY

Children are unique and special individuals and require respect, dignity, and love. Each child is valued as an individual, and as a member of a family, culture, and community. Early learning experiences should support the natural joy and wonder of young children and support a life-long love of learning.

The preschool values play as the child's natural way of learning. Through play and planned activities, children experiment, create, and construct their own knowledge. They encounter opportunities to develop language and literacy skills and acquire global concepts in math, science, and social studies that support later academic learning.

Children use their senses to experience the world. Hands-on learning opportunities encourage the growth and development of the whole child.


Children learn to respect and value others and the world around them as they interact with others in play and planned activities. Children with opportunities to make decisions learn self-reliance and experience natural consequences. Children, staff, and parents function best when they feel a sense of well-being in an environment full of joy, caring, fun, and safety.

Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool values teachers and parents as partners in the children's education.

GOALS

- To develop a positive self-concept in each child and the skills and confidence to develop positive social relationships.
- To provide a warm accepting environment where children feel comfortable and experience success.
- To provide developmentally appropriate activities where children are encouraged to create their own knowledge and develop skills through exploration and discovery.
- To provide a physical environment which is safe, attractive, reflects the families, cultures and community of the children and promotes learning and healthy development.
- To establish positive and productive relationships with families.
- To support staff's professional and personal growth through ongoing training, mutual respect, and sharing.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Please make every effort to drop off and pick up children on time. If you are unavoidably detained at pick-up time, please notify the school immediately so we can assure your child that all is well.
2. Parking! We have a conditional use permit through the City of Sitka stating we must drop off & pick up children from Lincoln St. & Katlian St. Parking in this neighborhood is a controversial subject so we need to be good neighbors. **WE ARE NOT ALLOWED TO PICK UP & DROP OFF CHILDREN FROM MARINE ST., KOGWANTON ST. OR SEWARD ST.** Teachers are happy to meet parents at the sidewalk next to the Community House on Katlian Street for drop-off and pick-up. If you need this service, please let us know.
3. School will start August 27th. The last day of school will be May 13th. Please see the school calendar for holiday and vacation dates.
4. Parent Teacher Conferences will be held in fall and spring. However, feel free to call your child's teacher at any time if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns.
5. Please notify us if your child will be absent from school.
6. Parent involvement is integral to our program. Please check in with the director or individual classroom teachers if you wish to join us in the classroom or be involved in other ways.
7. The Preschool phone number is 907 966-2675. If you need to speak to a teacher, please try to limit your calls to before and after class hours.
8.  Make sure a teacher knows when your child arrives and leaves. Please sign your child in and out every day on the Remini app. If someone will pick up your child who is not named on your emergency card, you will need to call preschool and provide that information.
9. Please dress children appropriately for the weather. We like to go outside daily unless the following unsafe conditions are present: temperatures below 15 degrees (F), high winds, or unsafe ice conditions on the playground. Children should wear comfortable, washable clothes. Please label all clothing and outerwear with your child's name.
10. Except for toys that are needed to help ease your child's transition from home to school or for a special occasion, we ask that children keep their own toys at home. Your child may, however, bring a favorite book to share with the other children.
11. We like to recognize your child's birthday. It will be celebrated as closely as possible to your child's actual birthday. Summer birthdays may be celebrated during the ½ way point of the birthday year or in the last month of school. If you would like to send a special snack that day, please contact us.
12. Our preschool usually has animals in residence, such as insects or gold fish. We also have animals visit us for short periods of time during the year.
13. Volunteers may occasionally assist and observe at preschool. You will be notified of any non-parental volunteers who join our program.
14. During the year we would appreciate your help in saving items for our use at preschool. We will list these on our Remini App or by email.

MT. EDGECUMBE PRESCHOOL POLICY

Welcome:

Parents are a fundamental part of our program and you are welcome to join us. Please schedule visits with individual classroom teachers.

Enrollment Requirements:

- A child must be age three through age six.
- We are prepared for the inevitable accidents but children must be out of diapers and have a basic level of toilet independence.

All of the following must be on file before your child can attend preschool.

1. Completed emergency information card (must be kept current).
2. Completed enrollment form.
3. \$40 registration fee.
4. Signed tuition contract and paid first and last month's tuition.
5. Copy of an up-to-date immunization record.

Total Enrollment: Mt. Edgcumbe Preschool is licensed to care for 22 children in each class period.

Insurance Coverage: Mt. Edgcumbe Preschool maintains liability coverage.

Disclosure of Information: No information on file at Preschool or given to the teacher in confidence will be disclosed to any individual or group without the express permission of the parent.

Non-Smoking: Our building is a smoke-free environment.

Notification of Changes: Notice of changes in our policies will be posted at school and included in our newsletter. Two weeks' notice will be given for any changes in MEPS policies.

Transportation: Transportation to and from the Preschool for preschool students is the parent's responsibility.

Illness: Please be considerate of others. If you think your child could make others sick, please keep your child out of preschool until your child is no longer contagious. **see "Infectious Illness" pg 7*

Medications: Parent or guardian permission is required for administering medications, including prescription and over the counter medications.

Emergency Procedures: If your child becomes ill or is accidentally injured at Preschool, you will be notified. If we are unable to contact you, then the emergency contact designated by you will be called. **It is extremely important to keep the Preschool informed of current phone numbers.** If needed, an emergency vehicle will be called. The parent will be expected to assume financial responsibility for any resultant expense.

There is at all time, at least one staff member on duty that has a current CPR and First Aid certificate.

Extended care: This is available for children before and after our regular preschool program in order to ease childcare and transportation challenges for some parents. Spaces are limited.

MT. EDGECUMBE PRESCHOOL POLICY Cont.

Parent Helpers: We encourage you to be a parent helper in the class with your child. There are many ways you may assist including reading stories to the children, helping with art and cooking projects, and helping with snack and clean-up. It is a time when you can share the children's joy and enthusiasm for life and become more familiar with your child's preschool experience. It is also an opportunity for you to help enrich the program by contributing your own unique interests and talents. Please check in with the director or individual classroom teachers if you wish to be a parent helper.

Scholarship Fund: This fund has been set up in response to our commitment to provide a quality program that reflects the diversity of our community. Applications for partial scholarship are available on our website (www.mtedgecumbepreschool.org under Enrollment) or by contacting the director or office manager.

We need donations to the scholarship fund and would greatly appreciate any amount of contribution you or your organization could make. Donations to Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool are tax-deductible.

Concerns: Concerns regarding our preschool should first be brought to the attention of the teacher involved. If concerns are not resolved, then contact the director. If you are not satisfied with the response, then the matter should be taken before the Board of Directors. Unresolved complaints concerning licensing regulations should be reported to the licensing representative, Dept. of Health and Social Services, Childcare Licensing, P.O. Box 110640, Juneau, AK 99811. Phone (907) 465-4756.

Tsunami Warning Procedures: Evacuation of the Preschool will begin immediately regardless of the amount of warning time given. If there is less than 45 minutes warning staff and helpers will take the children to the second floor of the Preschool. If there is at least 45 minutes left until the expected time of wave arrival the preschool bus and staff vehicles will be used for transporting the children to Sitka High School.

Special Needs: Please contact us if your child has special needs. We will meet these needs as indicated.

Discipline: A basic principle of our preschool is teaching children to respect themselves and others and to show that respect. Our Board of Directors and staff believe that discipline involves teaching children to learn control of themselves and when necessary to provide adult control of children. Good discipline combines caring and fairness with control. Clear and consistent limits are established based on respect for people and the environment.

We try to anticipate and avoid problems before they happen. We encourage and teach children to problem solve. We use words to help children understand their feelings and the feelings of other people.

We do not use physical punishment or any cruel or humiliating techniques. Children may be required to leave an activity until they regain self-control. Occasionally a child may need a few minutes by himself/herself with a teacher to express feelings, discuss actions and to regain self-control.

Child Abuse Reporting: State law requires a teacher who, in the performance of his or her duties, has cause to believe that a child has suffered harm as a result of abuse or neglect shall immediately report the harm to Department of Health and Social Services.

MT. EDGE CUMBE PRESCHOOL POLICY Cont.

Closure of School: If our preschool needs to be closed because of weather, heating malfunction, or power failure, parents will be notified by telephone.

Staffing: Maximum enrollment is 22 children at one time. We maintain a ratio of one staff for every 7 children.

Photos: We take photos of the children for preschool use. They are valuable in promoting language and help children develop self-concept with pictures of their activities and accomplishments. Photos provide a spark to share experiences among children, staff, and families.

We will also occasionally use photos taken of Preschool activities for promotional and/or advertising purposes. *Photos will not be used for this purpose without parental permission.*

Television, computers, etc.: Television, DVD, and video games are not available. Computers or iPads may be used occasionally by the teacher to support and enrich the learning experience.

Water and Food: The preschool will provide students with individual water bottles. Students will be free to access their water bottles as needed. Water bottles will be washed and sanitized daily.

Snacks must meet Food Program guidelines as determined by the Dept. of Health and Social Services. Snacks must include at least 2 of the following four food groups:

1. Milk
2. Fruit, vegetable, or juice
3. Meat or meat alternative
4. Bread or bread alternative

Snacks will primarily be prepared and served by staff. Staff will be trained on proper food handling to prevent spread of infectious disease. Staff will regularly post a “wish list” of needed bulk snack items. Parents may donate items from the list. Parents wishing to bring a prepared snack may check in with classroom teachers.

“Lunch bunch” students should bring a cold lunch that does not require re-heating.

Field Trips: We occasionally arrange field trips away from the preschool facility. A permission slip signed by a parent or guardian must be on file before a child can participate in any field trips.

Firearms: Firearms and ammunition are not present or allowed at the facility.

Poisonous Plants: This facility does not have poisonous plants.

INFECTIOUS ILLNESS

- Experiencing Symptoms of Illness: Children or staff experiencing symptoms of infectious illness must **stay home until symptoms resolve and the child is fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.**
 - Symptoms may include the following:
 - Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
 - Cough
 - Sore throat
 - Shortness of breath
 - Runny nose or congestion
 - Muscle Aches
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Headache
 - Unexplained fatigue
 - Children developing any of the above symptoms while at preschool will have their parents notified. Staff will arrange pick-up by a parent or the designated emergency contact on file.
- Personal Hygiene:
 - Handwashing - Arriving children will wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Children will also wash hands frequently throughout the day. Hand sanitizer will be used with adult assistance when soap and water is not available. *Please help your child develop proper hand-washing technique prior to attending preschool.*
- Healthy Environment:
 - Cleaning/Disinfecting - The school receives a thorough cleaning and disinfection daily. This includes surfaces, toys, and shared supplies and materials. In addition, hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day. Any toy that goes into a child's mouth will be removed from play until properly cleaned and disinfected.
 - Fresh Air - Windows will be open as much as the weather permits, and each classroom is equipped with a high-flow HEPA air purifier.
 - Environment - Each classroom will be set up to encourage plenty of personal space while also allowing for rich social interaction and relaxed activity.
 - Outside - We will spend a large part of each day outside. Please be sure your child is equipped with proper gear for extended periods outside.
- Visitors/Volunteers: Visitors and non-staff volunteers will be permitted at the discretion of staff.
- School Closures: Preschool classes may need to close on short notice due to teacher absence. **Please have a back-up child care plan in place.**
- Tuition Refunds: Please see the Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool Tuition Policy for information regarding school closures and subsequent tuition refunds.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

- Teachers make every effort to know children as unique and capable individuals. Ideas, interests, and cultures of children are respected and integrated into the daily curriculum and activities whenever possible.
- Children benefit when their preschool experience is part of the larger community. Families and friends are invited to preschool feasts, open houses, and other events and activities. Parents and other community members visit and share knowledge, skills, and experiences with us. Field trips further extend the children's understanding of themselves as part of a larger community.
- We support and guide children as they develop self-discipline. We help children identify and accept their feelings and learn to express them in appropriate ways. Our teachers help the children to know they can have warm, trusting relationships in their expanding world.
- Music, art, math, science, language arts, and social studies are integrated into the activities offered at Preschool. We support children in constructing their own broad base of knowledge through rich hands-on experiences and focused play. 'Real' activities such as cooking and carpentry are integral to our program.
- Because children learn by doing, ample opportunity is provided for them to observe, experiment, explore, discover, think critically and problem-solve.
- Children are provided opportunities for self-expression and experimentation in art materials, dramatic play, storytelling, and music. Opportunities for play with clay, sand, and water are frequent.
- We recognize the crucial importance of movement and physical expression. Children are provided ample opportunity for physical activity and challenges both indoors and outside.
- The school is organized into distinct areas with each having a specified function. There is a reliable framework of routines which include active and quiet times, individual and group times, indoor and outdoor times. A reliable, predictable environment fosters a feeling of security and encourages the development of independence. Children are given ample time to thoroughly explore and complete activities.
- We value families as partners in a child's educational experience. We strive to continually improve communication between preschool and families. We encourage parents and family members to participate and contribute to the preschool community. Parent participation may include being a parent helper, a guest who shares special interests and talents, a Board member, a committee member, etc.

SCHOOL CALENDAR DAYS

| Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 2025 - 2026 School Calendar | | | | | | |
| August '25 | | | | | | |
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | S |
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| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |
| September '25 | | | | | | |
| Su | M | Tu | W | Th | F | S |
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| October '25 | | | | | | |
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| November '25 | | | | | | |
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| 30 | | | | | | |
| December '25 | | | | | | |
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| January '26 | | | | | | |
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| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |
| February '26 | | | | | | |
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| March '26 | | | | | | |
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| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |
| April '26 | | | | | | |
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| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |
| May '26 | | | | | | |
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| 31 | | | | | | |
| June '26 | | | | | | |
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| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
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| July '26 | | | | | | |
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| | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
|  | School Closed/ Holidays |  | Parent-Teacher Conferences |
|  | Teacher Work Days |  | Friday school |
|  | Class Days |  | Friday Teacher Work Days |

SCHOOL CALENDAR DAYS Cont.

August 2025

8/27 First Day of School

September

9/1 Labor Day Holiday – No School

October

10/23 Parent-Teacher Conferences – No School

November

11/27-11/28 Thanksgiving Holiday

December

12/18 or 19 Last day of school before Winter Holiday

12/22-1/2/26 Winter Holiday Vacation

January 2026

1/5 1st day of School after Winter Holiday

1/19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

March

3/12 Parent-Teacher Conferences – No School

3/16-20 Spring Break

May

5/13/26 Last Day of School

MT. EDGECUMBE PRESCHOOL TUITION CONTRACT 2025-2026

REGISTRATION FEE: A \$40.00 registration fee per family per year is due at the time of initial registration & refundable only if a registration is cancelled before August 1.

| CLASS SCHEDULE | TUITION RATES |
|--|---------------|
| Total School Year Class Tuition <i>Based on 4 days per week attendance</i> | \$ 3,600.00 |
| Monthly Installments: | |
| Morning (8:30-11:30am) & Afternoon Class (1-4:00pm) | \$ 400.00 |
| Full Morning 8:00-12:00pm <i>limited availability</i> | \$ 530.00 |
| Full Morning 8:30-12:00pm | \$ 465.00 |
| Full Day 8:00am-4:00pm <i>limited availability</i> | \$ 1,060.00 |
| Full Day 8:30am-4:00pm | \$ 995.00 |
| Friday School 8:30am-11:30am <i>4yr old requirement, limited space</i> | \$ 120.00 |

TUITION POLICY:

- First and Last Month's Tuition is due prior to attendance. Tuition thereafter is payable the first day of each month or in a lump sum for the school year. Exceptions can only be made when a parent notifies the preschool office and makes payment arrangements.
- Exceptions to payment cannot be made for absence. Parents anticipating an extended absence may choose to withdraw the child.
- Two weeks' notification is required to withdraw a child from school or to reduce scheduled attendance. There will be no May Tuition refunds for a child leaving the program after March 1. This requirement may be waived in the case of medical emergency or extended illness.
- School may close for a public health emergency or natural disaster by government order or at the direction of the MEPS Board or the Executive Director. Parents will continue to be charged tuition for a closure of two weeks or less, or for the first two weeks of an extended closure. In the case of pre-paid tuition, no refund will be given for a closure of two weeks or less. For an extended closure pre-paid tuition will be fully refunded beginning the third week of the closure. Partial month refunds will be calculated on a daily equivalent rate.
- Classes may close in the case of teacher absence when a qualified substitute is not available. Parents will continue to be charged tuition for up to two teacher absences in a school year. In the case of additional class closures beyond two total days in a school year tuition will be refunded on a prorated basis.
- If tuition payment has not been received or satisfactory payment arrangements have not been made within the month tuition is due, the child will not be able to attend preschool the following month.
- The signer of this contract is responsible for any tuition, fees, or co-pays not covered by Child Care Assistance, scholarships, or any other tuition assistance programs.
- Payments can be made by Credit/Debit Card, Cash or Check. Address tuition checks to Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool, deliver to the school or mailed to: *Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool, 129 Seward St., Sitka, AK 99835*

You strengthen the preschool program by making prompt tuition payments on or before the 1st of every month.

I, _____ agree to the policies stated in this 2025-2026
 (Parent or Guardian 1) (Parent or Guardian 2)

School Year Tuition Contract with Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool for my child _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent or Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

EXPULSION POLICY

Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool reserves the right to deny attendance in our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We will do everything possible to work with the child and family in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

Possible reasons for expulsion of a child from the program include:

PARENTAL ACTIONS

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payment.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Verbal or physical abuse of staff, students or other parents.
- Threatening staff members.

CHILD ACTIONS

- Inability of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Inability of child to follow basic rules for health and safety.
- Frequent, uncontrollable and prolonged tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.

When a child is exhibiting behavior that could lead to expulsion:

- Parent/guardian will be notified.
- Staff will evaluate behavior support strategies, ensure that school policies and philosophy are being followed, and modify if needed.
- Staff will address and respond to the behavior with the goal of supporting the development of self-regulation in the child.
- Child's behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Staff may provide parent/guardian with parenting resources.
- Staff may recommend further professional evaluation of the child.

SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION

- If remedial actions fail and the staff determines that expulsion is necessary, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing.
- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child to return to the school.

A CHILD WILL NOT BE EXPELLED

- If child's parents:
 - Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a school's alleged violation of the licensing requirements.
 - Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the school.
 - Questioned the school regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent reasonable time to make other child care arrangements.

SNACK COMBO IDEAS



Bread, Crackers,
Muffins, Tortilla
Chips, Whole Grain
Chips, Rice,
Popcorn, Graham
Crackers, Rice
Cakes, Bagels, Low
Sugar Dried Cereal,
Whole Wheat
Goldfish, Granola



Yogurt, Cheese,
String Cheese,
Milk & Milk
Alternatives,
Nut Butter
(NOT Peanut Butter),
Lunch Meat,
Pepperoni,
Salami, Walnuts,
Almonds,
Pistachios, Seeds,
Hummus, Bean
Dip, Salmon, Tuna



Oranges, Mandarin
Oranges, Apples,
Bananas, Grapes,
Raisins, Dried Fruit,
Fruit Leathers,
Frozen Berries,
Mango, Kiwi,
Melon, Cherries,
Applesauce,
Watermelon,
Banana Chips, Fruit
Kabobs



Carrots, Celery,
Cucumbers, Salsa,
Frozen Peas,
Cauliflower,
Broccoli, Cherry
Tomatoes, Snap
Peas, Small
Peppers, Black
Olives, Vegetable
Kabobs,
Guacamole, Soy
Beans

PICK FROM 2 OR MORE COLUMNS

BULK FOOD IDEAS



SEVERE: Peanuts & Milk

NO Peanuts or Peanut Butter
Brought to School

Oat, Soy, Rice, Almond &
Coconut Milk are a
Welcome Substitute when
Cow Milk is used.

ALLERGENS:
Wheat & Eggs



Corn Tortilla Chips, Nut Butter (NOT PEANUT),
Cheerios, Granola Bars, Applesauce, Raisins,
Dried Cherries, Dried Apricots,
Dried Seaweed, Cans/Jars of Olives & Pickles,
Dried Mango (no sugar added), Craisins,
Fig Bars, Canned Sliced Peaches, Fruit Leather,
Bag of Apples, Bag of Carrots, Asian Rice Snacks,
Frozen Blueberries, Frozen Peas, Frozen Soy Beans,
Salmon Dip (w/ mayo),
Gluten Free Crackers, Jelly & Jam

2025-26 School Year
Class Sizes are Generally 5-7

Morning Classes:

21 Children Total & 3 Teachers

Afternoon Classes:

14 Children Total & 2 Teachers

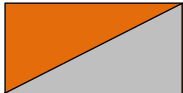
THANK YOU for Bringing Healthy Snacks
So Your Kids Can Do Their Best!

Please Ask About Allergies for Special Food Events like Birthdays
BEFORE bringing something in for your child's classroom.

Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool Parking Reminder



Parking Allowed



No Parking!



**Reserved Paid Parking Area
For Preschool Bus & Staff,
Daily Sitka Sentinel Staff &
Other Paid Businesses Only**

Marine St.

Kaagwaantaan St.

Seward St.

**The Back
of the
Pioneer
Home**

Barracks St.

Katlian St.

Lincoln St.

When dropping off or picking up students, parking is allowed **ONLY** on Katlian & Lincoln Streets.

This is a requirement of our City of Sitka Building Occupation Conditional Use Permit.